

## Teri Ambs

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**From:** Rick Thompson <4mrick@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2014 9:00 AM  
**To:** Teri Ambs  
**Subject:** Written testimony for Gov Ops Committee March 11, 2014

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Senators-

Americans for Safe Access (ASA) is the largest national member-based organization of patients, medical professionals, scientists and concerned citizens promoting safe and legal access to cannabis for therapeutic uses and research. The Michigan Chapter of Americans for Safe Access respectfully requests that both medical marijuana bills HB4271 and HB5104 be supported and passed, as they are currently written, by this committee.

ASA encourages the establishment of a system that provides access to medication in a way that respects each patient and caregiver's rights without undue and burdensome regulations. Both bills, as written, would contribute to satisfying this mission.

As passed by the House, HB 4271 would not interfere with the current allowable methods of cultivation and distribution between patients and caregivers as described in the Michigan Medical Marihuana Act (MMA). HB 4271 gives local authorities the power to create ordinances to regulate how many of these Centers their community accepts, if any, and where they can locate. The county and state-level police agencies will have the knowledge and ability to confirm that these entities are recognized on a state-wide level, when permitted, and municipalities will be able to inspect Centers as they would any other community business.

To supply the sick with the various forms of medication needed to treat the variety of illnesses and ailments listed in the MMA, HB 4271 works with the existing network of caregivers and cultivating patients that has legally existed in Michigan for five years. Through this mechanism it is ensured that the medicine distributed through the Centers originates in Michigan, is tested for contaminants and is quantity-controlled. The system established by HB 4271 uses free-market principles to offer a variety of products and a range of prices that is locally responsive.

HB 5104 creates a definition of usable marijuana that encompasses both extracted and non-smoked forms of marijuana products. HB 5104 would codify in law the common standard of marijuana use that existed in Michigan for the first four years of the MMA. The concept of usable marijuana established by the Michigan Court of Appeals is narrow and ignores many of the foods and topical treatments in which Michigan's patient population has become accustomed.

This abrupt change in treatment options has forced many patients to turn away from a trusted source of relief. Marijuana in pill form, in liquids or in ointments has proven to be more effective than smoking for many of the state's 125,000 registered medical marijuana patients. This includes pediatric patients and the ability of the parent or guardian caregiver, to adequately and consistently provide treatment.

HB 4271 and HB 5104 have been carefully crafted to allow changes to the production and distribution of medical marijuana that will protect patients and ensure a continuity of treatment while affording local authorities great discretion in deciding to what degree their community will participate. Americans for Safe

Access urges you to pass these two bills out of Committee in their current form, to encourage a swift consideration by the full Senate and to affirm them when the opportunity to vote arises

Thank you.

**Michigan chapter of Americans for Safe Access**

Jamie Lowell, Chairman